

# The Book of Titus: How to Talk About Politics and Religion

 [www.pursuegod.org/the-book-of-titus-how-to-talk-about-politics-and-religion/](http://www.pursuegod.org/the-book-of-titus-how-to-talk-about-politics-and-religion/)

The letter of Titus was written to the leader of the Christians in Crete, a people who were known for being particularly contentious, argumentative and divisive. In particular, much like our world today, they loved to fight and argue over two main issues – politics and religion. This was causing problems, both in the church and with their non-believing neighbors. In the midst of all this unhealthy conflict, God sends some important messages about how understanding the Gospel changes how we deal with these tough topics.

## The Gospel gives us a new priority for life

The first thing Paul does in chapter 3 is to remind us that we shouldn't get all caught up in politics, especially when it causes strife with our friends and those in authority.

**Titus 3:1-2** *“Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. 2 They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling.”*

Paul told the Christians to submit to the government and avoid slandering and arguing with others. He knew that when Christians became engrossed in political controversy, it distracted them from their real goal of making disciples. Not only would the government crackdown on the Christians, which slowed the growth of the church, it also gave them a bad reputation among the non-believers, which also slowed the growth of the church. Since God is most deeply concerned with growing his Kingdom, we shouldn't get caught up in stuff that is going to make that harder. Christians can still be involved in politics and perform their civic responsibilities, but we need to always remember our real priority – which is helping people pursue God, first and foremost.

## The Gospel gives us a new focus on the essentials

Not only did the Cretans argue about politics, but they loved to squabble over insignificant religious matters. Rather than getting all fired up about stuff that really doesn't matter, Paul says to them:

**Titus 3:8-9** *“This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone. 9 Do not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws. These things are useless and a waste of time.”*

The “trustworthy saying” he is referring to is the simple Gospel message he shared in the previous verses. He says that we should focus on the basics of the Gospel – that our problem is sin, our solution is Jesus, and our response is faith – and not spend our time fighting over the less essential stuff. It's not that theology doesn't matter, because it does, especially the essentials. And while there can be a time to dig into the more non-essential theological issues, it shouldn't be our priority, and it shouldn't distract us and lead to divisions.

## The Gospel gives us a new goal of unity

Ultimately, God doesn't want us divided as Christians, but united – this is our goal, and it needs to be protected.

**Titus 3:10-11** *“If people are causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them. 11 For people like that have turned away from the truth, and their*

| own sins condemn them.”

Unity is so important that if people are threatening it, we shouldn't tolerate them in our lives. We need to fight for unity because it is a powerful witness to the world.

**John 13:34-35** “So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

The more we can learn to deal with the tough issues of politics and religion in a way that keeps the Gospel in focus, the more it will lead to unity and be a powerful testimony to the world of the reality of Jesus Christ. This should be our deepest desire.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

[Submit questions](#)

1. **Set Up:** Watch the video together or invite someone to [summarize the topic](#).
  2. What are some of the most controversial political issues today? What are some of the most controversial religious issues today?
  3. What are some ways that you've seen Christians deal with these controversial issues poorly? What are some of the negative consequences you've seen as a result?
  4. Read [Titus 3:1-2](#). Why do you think Paul gave such a command – especially considering how bad and corrupt their government was?
  5. What are ways for Christians to be involved in the political arena without losing sight of our real priorities of making disciples?
  6. Read [Titus 3:4-7](#). Make a list of the essential truths of the Gospel contained in this passage?
  7. What are some of the non-essential truths that Christians often argue over? How do you know the difference between an essential and nonessential theological issue? When does a theological discussion cross the line from appropriate to a “useless waste of time?”
  8. Read [Titus 3: 10-11](#). Why is the unity of Christians so important?
  9. Read [John 13:34-35](#). In what ways is our unity a witness to the world?
  10. **Takeaway:** Write a [personal action step](#) based on this conversation.
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